

GAS WATCH 265.

Hunter Valley Vineyards safe, at last, from AGL's CSG mining.

AGL Energy has today announced that it will divest itself of the two Petroleum Exploration Licences which cover the Hunter Valley Vineyards, including Broke, Fordwich, Bulga, Milbrodale and Pokolbin.

AGL said *"the overlay of Critical Industry Clusters and the two kilometre setback result in this resource not being economic to develop"*. This basis for AGL's decision clearly reflects our continuing representations and our map of exclusion zones which we continually presented to AGL. See full announcement below.

AGL has said that *"PELs 2, 4 and 267 will be sold as part of the NSW Government's PEL buy-back scheme"*.

After over 11 years opposing the development of coal seam methane gas mining in the Hunter Valley vineyards, we can finally see success from this announcement.

The vineyards are safe from AGL.

AGL appears to have now accepted the position the community has been putting to it for over a decade.

Despite all the bluster from AGL and APPEA over the last couple of years of a "gas supply crisis", AGL says in its announcement *"AGL has a strong gas supply position through a combination of contracted gas at competitive prices and owned production at Camden. This covers AGL's expected household demand until 2027 and contracted commercial and industrial demand until 2021."*

But whilst the vineyards appear now safe from AGL, the PELs will be sold back to the Government. We must be vigilant to ensure that the Government doesn't attempt to try and sell them, or give them, to another explorer. Although you wouldn't think that any prudent explorer would want them after AGL finding that they are not economic.

We believe that our next step is to have the vineyards protected by Legislation similar to the Character Preservation Acts protecting the Barossa Valley and Maclaren Vale winegrowing regions.

We believe that much of the hard work is now done.

Congratulations to all who have worked so hard to protect our winegrowing region from CSG.

Still plenty to do in other areas though – the protection of Bulga pretty much top of the list.



www.huntervalleyprotectionalliance.com

6th July, 2015. Contact: Graeme Gibson 0418 239359 OR Stewart Ewen 0408 234773

See: <http://www.agl.com.au/about-agl/media-centre/article-list/2015/july/upstream-gas-review-results>